HILLSBOROUGH LITERACY COUNCIL

VISIONS
Stories by New Adult Readers and English Language Learners

2019
Welcome

Hillsborough Literacy Council
President

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Hillsborough Literacy Council (HLC), we thank our volunteer tutors for their dedication and selflessness in working with their peers. We also celebrate with great admiration, the students’ commitment to invest in themselves to improve both their written and oral communication skills.

Learning or improving upon a language can be challenging and intimidating. The one-on-one sessions provided through our program allow students to build trust with their tutors and challenge themselves to improve their communication skills.

The progress made allows students to be more independent, self-sufficient and confident. It also means students can more easily participate in society, whether it is ordering a meal, filling out paperwork, sharing an opinion or debating a point.

The narratives contained in this publication provide a glimpse into the lives of some of our current students. I’m sure we will all find inspiration in these stories.

The Board thanks our donors, partners and sponsors in supporting our commitment to helping adults achieve essential English comprehension and communication skills.

Karla Guzman-Mims
President

Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library
Director of Library Services

In order to “mean what you say” you have to be able to “say what you mean” - this time-tested adage really speaks to the importance of adult literacy as a transformative experience in a person’s life. Being able to read and write is a major step in finding your voice - being able to say what you mean. Literacy goes beyond the ability to read and write, and includes the ability to use these skills to communicate effectively. Being able to communicate in your own voice is a priority and the ultimate investment we can make for your future, and the future of our community.

I want to celebrate the courage of our adult students and new Americans in recognizing the importance of words and in seeking help with basic written and spoken English. Their efforts are remarkable and their stories here in the pages of Visions are truly inspiring.

I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of the students, tutors and Board members of the Hillsborough Literacy Council for committing to improve the lives of our citizens and the prosperity of our community. Your example serves as inspiration to all who would help others find their own voice.

Andrew Breidenbaugh
Library Director
The Hillsborough Literacy Council

The Hillsborough Literacy Council (HLC) is a nonprofit affiliate of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library teaching functionally and marginally illiterate adults to read and write through its Adult Basic Literacy program. In its English for Speakers of Other Languages program, participants learn to read, write and communicate in basic English.

HLC accepts adults 18 and over. Depending upon the student’s level, learning to read can take a year or more.

HLC needs volunteer tutors and will provide them training and materials. We ask our tutors to commit to one year’s work with their student(s).

HLC seeks funding partners and donations which will directly support the program by providing student materials and supplies for tutor trainings.

For more information, visit hillsboroughliteracy.org or call (813) 273-3650.

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The Hillsborough Literacy Council supports our tutors who graciously volunteer to help students develop strategies and techniques for reading and comprehension. It is a lifelong learning process and our students excel in their dedication to participate in the process.

The following are stories written by our current students. The stories have been printed in the exact manner in which the students have written them. Please enjoy and learn about our amazing students through their stories.

Accidental Fire of Notre Dame Cathedral
Jose Patino

In this opportunity, I consider that one of the delicate and regrettable moments that this across the catholic community and other communities in the world, have relation with the fire that partially consumed the Cathedral of Notre Dame, occurred in April 16, 1919.

Notre Dame Cathedral has a history of over 8 centuries. It’s construction was started in 1163 and concluded in 1345.

The Holy See, received a shock upon hearing of the conflagration. It is the most visited monument in the city of Paris. It’s symbol of all Europeans.

The roof was destroyed to a large extent. The incredible tower, almost 100 meters high, known the needle.

At the start of the fire, 200 people were inside the cathedral. Fortunately, They were evacuated without any setback.

Fortunately there were no victims, because they attend 400 firefighters to smother the flames.

The area of historical treasures could also be saved.

Its reconstruction is calculated approximately in 200 millions of Euros.

American Impression
Jihon Fan

As a scholar, I’m not only focused on my research, but also interested in American culture and customs. As for the later, I have some good experience and impression.

The good impression made me admire the US people more. Before I came to America, my family worried about if it is safe in the US, but since I arrived here, I feel different environment from what I thought. Here people are friendly and kind, they are hospitable and warmhearted.

First of all, when I landed on the American land, all the people I met are friendly. The customs officer talked with me patiently, they guided me the directions although my English is not good.

Secondly, people are patient and willing to help me with all kinds of business, such as fill in forms, buy car and pass the driver’s license test in collector office or like this.

The most important thing is that American people are kind, thankful and sharable. On Thanksgiving day, Christmas Festival, or Easter I was and will be invited to their home to share the festival meal. From this I learned the US culture and the background.

There are many things that impressed me deeply, and these are some top of I have impressed about the US, all this make me like America.

Cycling
Luis Ramirez

When I was young, I admired the great cyclists of my country. There were several famous names that I remember as Martin Emilio Rodriguez worldwide known as “Cochise”, winner of the world record of the hour, Alvaro Pachon, Luis Alberto “Lucho” Herrera, well known as “the little gardener” among others.

In cycling, the record of the hour is the greatest distance traveled on the bicycle in one hour, generally done in a velodrome.

These cyclists emerged to the hall of fame with effort, dedication and sometimes without sponsorship of any company. They were cycling titans. Some participated internationally in famous races such as the “Giro di Italia, “the tour of France”, “Vuelta a España, etc.

Maybe that’s why the passion for this sport grew fast in our country.

One day when I started to work, I decided to save some money and I bought a gray, light, and fast bike. At this time, I already had a group of friends that loved riding too.

Almost every weekend we organized a tour and went to the near towns around the city. Those lasted most of day. We could ride for six or seven hours in a row during day. It was a very exciting experience because at the beginning I didn’t know how to ride well, but soon I got practice.
Fortunately among us there was a fiend of us, who taught everyone how to compete correctly. He taught us for example, how to ride by turns. This is when the rider who went first, after a while he passed to the last position of the row. Then after some minutes the new rider in the first position passed to the last place again, and so on. This technique avoided team getting tired and allowed all the riders advance as a group.

During the rides we drank water and ate a kind of candy called “panela” (product made from sugar cane), it provided us energy for those long distances. One of the worst parts of cycling was when we went uphill. Sometimes, we were very tired that was very difficult to continue. Then, we had to get off the bike and walked until we could ride again.

I think, the worst was when the rest of the team went ahead and one of us was left alone. Here, the rider had to pedal hard and faster during some time to reach the group. Another unhappy situation we had to suffer was when it rained a lot, because we could not stop but the sun dried our clothes.

The best part of those trips was when we reached our goal in a high mountain and we could see below all the splendor of nature, the river, the valleys, tress, flowers, fruits, butterflies of all colors. You can breathe fresh air. It is wonderful and indescribable what you feel at that moment.

When we returned home, were very exhausted but happy, because we had enjoyed the trip. This way, I visited many interesting places around the city we lived. It was a very exciting experience. I shared very good moments with my friends. I exercised much more and learnt many things otherwise I wouldn’t have. Today, I think that if I would have the opportunity to do it again, I would.

### Bodrum

**Selin Er**

How do I explain? Where do I start? These are the lyrics of a famous Turkish song about Bodrum. Those words truly tell the truth about this Turkish town in the southwestern Aegean region of the country. The only way to really know Bodrum is seeing it.

Bodrum, which was a small and quiet fishing town once, now is bigger than some cities in Turkey. The town with the population of thirty-six thousand people hosts over 2 million tourists during the summer. Bodrum, is not only the most touristic town of Turkey, but it is also one of the most touristic towns of Europe.

With its miles and miles of sandy beaches and crystal clear Aegean sea Bodrum is definitely one of the most favorite touristic spots for beach lovers. However, Bodrum has a lot to offer. One of the seven wonders of the ancient world, Mausoleum of Halikarnassus is here or should I say was here as it was destroyed by the earthquakes in Middle Age. However not all the historical buildings are destroyed. The castle, amphitheater and the city gate are all worth to visit.

During the summer almost every night you can go to a concert and enjoy the music in the magical atmosphere of the amphitheater. Because of vicinity to Greek islands and with several cruises a lot of tourists from Europe come to Bodrum to see the both coasts of Aegean sea.

As you can see Bodrum has something for every taste and I did not even start to talk about Mediterranean food that can be found on countless on the water restaurants and a very colorful night life. You can stay at some of the most luxurious resorts of the world or at cute small boutique hotels. Come and see Bodrum, then you will understand me better.

### Gardening, a daily joy

**Elfi Loya**

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I love gardening. I think gardening is a wonderful option for people of my age to be healthy. My name is Elfi Loya and I just turned 80 years old. I’m very happy, but I understand I need to stay active physically and mentally. That’s way I choose to garden everyday.

When I moved to the United States, my daughter and my son in law converted the back yard in a vegetable garden for me to have a daily activity. At the beginning, it was scary because I never took care for a big garden before. But now, it is easy for me and I love it.

Gardening helps me because I have a daily routine. Every morning I wake up with something in mind, I get up, put my gardening shoes on and water all my plants. I check them to see if they are healthy and don’t have insects. I check my tomatoes, onions, blackberries and papayas.

When I garden, I focus on what I’m doing, and I think that is a remedy for stress. Besides, being in contact with nature is very relaxing.

Gardening gives me joy because I plant my vegetables and see them grow. I see them develop because of what I do. I work a lot, but my plants reward me with their fruits. It is the greatest gift.

Harvesting time is the best. I get my bucket and start collecting the fruits. That is very special. I feel very accomplished because it the result of my work and effort. And then, I share my happiness with my family when I come inside the house and hand my daughter some fresh vegetables to eat.

Physically, gardening helps me a lot. It is my daily exercise. I have to walk the garden, I bend to pull weed out, I reach up to pick papayas. I have to look carefully to spot the blackberries that are ready to eat.

In conclusion, gardening helps me in many ways. I really think this is something worthy for people of my age to try. It is an activity full of benefits.
Generosity...
Nydia E. Martínez

Generosity is a value and a quality of people who are characterized by helping others in an honest way, convinced and without hoping to get anything in return. It can be appreciated and considered as a trait of kindness among people. It is a value that is learned and trained through practice. I mean, the generous one is for his deeds and not just for his words. It shows how to be kind and close in dealing with a person who not only thinks of himself, but also cares about the well-being of the other.

The general idea is to learn to give the best that we have whether material or spiritual, it can be advice, hours of company or ideas for someone to solve a difficult problem. It is not to stand out among others, or to make them see that you can be generous. If you give it is because you want to give, if you offer it is because it is born from your heart to lend a help, a hand or even a council without the need to receive something in return of equal value or greater.

Like many values, the idea of generosity can vary by person. It can be influenced by the cultural and social environment. What in some places can be considered a simple act of courtesy or education, in other cultures can be seen as a manifestation of enormous generosity.

In my opinion, I think that my English Tutor, Mrs. Erin Phillips, is a very generous person because she has volunteered her time without receiving any benefit. Our weekly meetings at the Hillsborough County Public Library, have been enriching because it has allowed us to know our cultures, strengths, weaknesses and many other things. Her passion for serving went beyond her responsibility, because when I could not attend the Library for health reasons, she generously visited me at home to continue our meetings... action for which I will always be grateful...

I also want to thank Hillsborough County Public Library for giving me the opportunity to take Conversational English classes after coming from Puerto Rico, after Hurricane Maria.

Important of Balanced life
Tomomi Phillips

As I getting old, I notice that balance of life is key to have happy life. Too much of anything is not good. Example, too much money, too much freedom too much friends are bad I think.

When I was young I worked hard earned plenty money. I traveled all over the world. Drive convertible live in ocean view condo. I enjoyed my single life but when I looked back I was not taking care of myself.

I did not know anything about mental health I was eating and drinking whatever I want, not exercising enough. When I got married, I moved U.S I started exercise and I was getting knowledge about mental health. I had a lot of love from my new family but I know something was missing. In order to move U.S, I have to quited my job in Japan. I became house wife.

After 14 years of military life and soul search, I found out I need meditation, Svaroopa yoga, Kick boxing, of cause my family some good friends who I can trust and part time job. These elements make me help balanced (stay happy). I am not 100% balanced yet, but I know I am in right direction. I can said I am pretty happy.

Learning to Read
Danny Hill

I happy for the optrunity to Learn how to read and writer.

I feel better about my self. I have allways felt a shamed be cause people make fun of you when they find out that you can’t read.

The program make you feel like ther is hope. you can learn.

I’m looking froword to learning more. not only is my reading inproved but my writing is inproving to. So think you for optunetly and the program.
My name is Hyunjung Gihm

My name is Hyunjung Gihm. I was born in Seoul Korea and grew up there. I liked math when I was in middle and high school, and majored in education in college. After college, I had a job teaching math to middle school children, but I got married and quit the job to take care of my son.

I moved to the U.S. three years ago because of my husband’s job, and I found it difficult to speak and listen here. Because English education that I learned in Korea is not based on listening and speaking but is limited to grammar-oriented education and writing that can solve problems.

I became very frustrated when I encountered difficulties in noticing American pronunciation and situations in which Americans did not understand my pronunciation. Then I met my tutor, Marie, through the library.

After meeting, my confidence gradually recovered and I became interested in English. I decided to join a second group conversation class with Maxine who is a very good English teacher.

I am not good enough yet, but as I studied with Marie and Maxine, I decided to dream of teaching math to children again.

Thank you very much, Marie and Maxine.

The Family

Ernesto Millan

In studies of sociology and anthropology it has been established that the primary nucleus of all society is the family, constituted initially by a man and a woman from which derive one lineage or descendants that are called sons and that between they are considered like brothers, that is the beginning of one familial descendants.

When our God created the man he said to himself; it’s not good that the man is alone then; he made a woman like companion who has the power to give the birth of humanity.

There after the man and the woman constituted the family; they gave to every member the education, rights, duties and obligations, and the knowledge of the activities that permit them to put in the social group that correspond.

So many social values, families, religions and morals that are ongoing in every human being constitute the legacy of a society across which through education lead to the successful stability of the people with customs, myths and legends, religions and behaviors.

Some show up violently or without community spirit, but on the other hand they could be good people or civilians.

Anyway, the family is the strength of every home and the heart of humanity.

The Town N’ Country English Conversation Corner celebrates the end of the year with delicious dishes from around the world.

Picture 1

Untitled

Monica Gonzales

I was always curious to learn a new language, however in my country the language learning was not important tool for the life of the students.

My experience with the English goes back to the time of the school. These early teachers lacked proper training and left many gaps in learning. My decision learn language woke up even more when I saw that it was a reality my residence in this country. I went to several schools to learn English because it is the universal language and I would anywhere in the world.

From that moment, study and improve the English ceased to be something that was used to pass exams and became a vital necessity.

This means speaking English as much as possible. This is difficult when you think in Spanish!

The courses taken provided me a knowledge of basic but very different from the reality of practice the language as such.

It was when I decided to enroll in the program and I was assigned a tutor. My experience with Deb has been wonderful because it helped me to live in English.

Their classes are very special and I have worked to develop the ear and better understand pronunciation.

I discovered that my biggest difficulty is clearly understanding when I talk. But there are infinite ways to present English in your life as you look at films in English, change the language on your phone, regularly listening to radio, and search conversations with English-speaking Internet.

Today all this is within the reach of everyone. With the support of Deb I feel proud of my efforts and for the enormous satisfaction of responding “Yes, I do” when someone asks you “Do you speak English”? .
Adventures of Odessa Inhabitant in America. Alex Vinokurov

I was born in Odessa, Ukraine. Odessa is a special city, and the most various qualities, including fraud and sense of humor with constant jokes are attributed to Odessa inhabitants. I can tell nothing about my sense of humor and whether I joked constantly. But my wife who was born on the Caucasus Mountains, as I remember, quite often said to me: “Can you sometime be serious?”

Thirty nine years ago we immigrated to America. And there came serious times. It was necessary to find job and not to hang on the neck of the relatives who brought us here. Now I was reading announcements in newspapers for whole days, was sending my resumes to different companies and was reading instructions about behaving on interviews. Rules were quite strict.

And here being squeezed by these rules, I was on an interview in the Bath Iron Work company, located in the state of Maine. The interview went as was expected. The head of the technical department and two engineers asked me technical questions, from time to time, asking about life in Russia. Apparently my answers satisfied the company representatives. At last the head of the department said: “Okay. I have the last question. You designed small the presses in Odessa. We design big presses here. What can you say about it?”

And here in me the Odessa genes were suddenly shown. I said: “I will tell you an Odessa joke. The Odessa philharmonic hall placed an advertisement in the newspaper “In philharmonic hall the violinist is required.” In response to this announcement one person comes to the philharmonic hall. He was asked: “Have you ever played a violin.” The answer was as follows: “Never played, but I think that I will be able.” Everybody began laughing. And the chief said laughing: “Well, the answer is convincing. You will receive our decision by mail.”

In two days I received the answer. I was employed with very good conditions. Odessa jokes had worked abroad. But before it I worried whether I behave correctly saing a joke in such serious circumstances.

The Virtue of Teaching Roberto Mallea

On the development of my profession as a physical therapist in USA I started in Delaware on 1975 to continue in Florida 1981 working in hospitals, clinics, rehab home cares.

So on 2006 at the healthcare company my last working place; my supervisor was the man who gave me the orientation, everything was fine. But passing by few months I was told that the whole paper work on therapy should be done on line (computer) that really impact my life because I always have been an enemy of the computer.

So I said to my supervisor there is no way I could continue on this job because my work on the computer make me feel clumsy and ashamed, but my supervisor answered the more you practice the more you learn so I took advantage of my supervisor’s back up hiring a technician by night who charged me $50 an hr. but I download information, completed my reports and routing out from my home to the office around 11:30 PM everyday. I remembering the office manager working on high level duty, leaving her desk and everything apart to come to my desk and help out.

Finally I learned the job thanks to those who believe that all human being have been created equally, and thanks to the virtue of those who did teaching with love, care and not apprentice humiliation.

My Uber Job Thais Barrios

Six months ago I started my work in uber eats. I have taken foods to more than 600 families and I have made many friends.

I have been living many good moments to talk about. Recently in a delivery to bring breakfast for a family who seemed to be from my country Venezuela. When I knocked the door, a boy opened it and said in Spanish: “Moom breakfast is arrived”. Sudently I told the lady that was sitting at the table “happy mothers’ day” and then everyone smiled and said “thanks a lot” and asked me to wait a seconds and gave me a good tip.

The thing most make me happy was this situations remember my country because everyone was around the table waiting for breakfast and the child who opened the door told everybody that breakfast was ready to him and every family.

I also recently fall down when I get out of my car to verify the direction that I believed was not the correct. I hurt my left hand and my leg. Currently I dont feel very good but righ now I am feelig better.

In the time I’m living in Tampa since the two years ago, I have known a lot of people from different countries what has made me feel very good because I have learned different customs and has made me grow as a person.

The American citizens in this country are very nice and respectful, a difference from those of other countries, they always have a smile during the beginning of the day and all day, also they always help when perceive that one dosnt speak English well. And many times have a lot of patience to explain instructions or addresses.
The evolution of society has been in constant development, based on transformations in the different aspects that make up the environment of man both materials and technologies that have an impact on survival of the human being. This does not go unnoticed in daily life, which influences significantly leading to behavioral changes as the evolution is progressive becoming a trend.

For this reason, when talking about progress is also synonymous with movement, so we can emphasize that the kinematics includes the study of the forces applied to the organism that generate injury mechanisms, being these responsible for the injuries found in victims caused by traumatisms. The Trauma Committee of the American College of Surgeons, defines the "injury mechanism as the origin of the forces that produce mechanical deformations and physiological responses that cause an anatomical injury or a functional change in the body of the traumatized patient” So we can review the description of the movement of solid objects without considering the causes that originate them (forces), limited mainly to the study of the trajectory as a function of time, referring to the concept of kinematics.

It is important to know and recognize the mechanism of injury that caused the injury in the traumatized patient. The pathophysiology of trauma is determined by the conceptualization of trauma, which consist of injuries resulting from the body’s sudden exposure to a source of energy or the absence of elements vital to life such as oxygen and heat. Injuries are produced by the transmission of energy applied to our body in a sudden, will cause different types of injuries, blunt trauma (blunt or blunt), open or penetrating. The energy can be:
- Kinetic or movement energy
- Thermal energy
- Electric power
- Chemical energy
- Mechanical energy
- Radiant energy.

A Story to Laughing
Herminia Morales

Of all the situations lived by me in the country, the story that I am going to tell you, was extraordinarily beautiful but, also, had it’s a moments of concerns about it would be resolved.

In 2004, I had the last appointment with the immigration judge to decide of my case to obtain my legal residence in the United States. This day I had, of course, the appear my defense attorney at 2:00 P.M. A this time, the lawyer did not appear, and de judge decided to star without him, as a concessions for I am presented punctually.

A few minutes later, the honorable judge proceeded with the protocol of any judicial hearing, and asked me the necessary questions and put end to the case. The judge took his time and, meanwhile, I was anxious with my very tight hands until bled and mentally praying to my Heavenly Father who was, a that time, my defense lawyer.

These time was eternal. Finally the honorable judge said: Mrs. Herminia Morales he decided to approve your case. Do you agreement with his decision?

I don’t can answered, I had been in maximum shock.

The judge return to ask: me, Mrs. Morales are you in agreement with this decision? And I said: !Of course, Mr. Judge!

So I told the secretary that if I could thank him and hug him? And the judge answered me: of course. Then, I ran up to the stand and took his hand and I beat his hands in a state of emotion, so great that it seemed , that it was going to start. Give him from top to bottom and he said thanks you, thanks you judge, thanks you …………. And beat that beats the hands, once and other way. God bless to you, to wisdom and continue to help anyone who wants to get legal documents.

I woke up and let go of his hands and embrace by de waist, because he was very tall, and I told him to lower his head to kiss him. I was very spontaneous at the same time, for de judge as emotional and surprising.

Can you imagine the scene? That was a movie scene. The whole movie was real.

When I upturned of reality I felt very embarrassed and I told the judge to excuse me, and he answered: for that manifestation of sincere joy, I had with you, as an exception and I had to give a copy the approval resolution and keep it very well for your protection, while the official final document arrived to you.

The honorable judge said me: I had never done that with anyone.

All this happened in an one hour, or more, but it seemed a century of the time to me, but that had a happy final, a God Thanks.
The Polish alphabet is based on the Latin alphabet. Which means that the basic letters are the same ones used in English. However, Polish includes also some letters with diacritical marks.

The total count of letters in the Polish alphabet is 32. There are 9 vowels and 23 consonants and 7 letters among them contain diacritics: the acute accent (ć); the overdot (ż); the tail (ą); the stroke (ł).

What’s more, the letters q, v and x are not counted among Polish letters, as there is no need to use them in Polish wording. They appear only in words of foreign origin.

Below I gather some of Polish letters with their names, examples and how they sound in English. As you can see, the Polish alphabet isn’t too difficult for native English speakers.

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<th>Polish name</th>
<th>Similar English sound</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<td>A ą</td>
<td>a; a with tail</td>
<td>nasal o (a bit like o in own)</td>
<td>mąka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ć ć</td>
<td>cie; ce with accent</td>
<td>like ch in cheap, but a bit softer</td>
<td>mieć</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E ę</td>
<td>e; e with tail</td>
<td>nasal e</td>
<td>pękaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ł ł</td>
<td>el</td>
<td>like w in will</td>
<td>igła</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ń ų</td>
<td>en; en with accent</td>
<td>like ny in canyon</td>
<td>koń</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ŷ ó</td>
<td>o with accent; &quot;closed u&quot;</td>
<td>like oo in wood</td>
<td>góra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ś ś</td>
<td>es; es with accent</td>
<td>like sh in sheep, but softer</td>
<td>ślimak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ż ż</td>
<td>ziet; zet with accent</td>
<td>somewhat like ši in vision, but softer</td>
<td>żrebak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ź ź</td>
<td>žet; žet with dot</td>
<td>like ši in vision</td>
<td>żebro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But it’s not over. The Polish alphabet has these formations called “digraphs”. Digraphs are when two letters are used to write one sound. You can think of it like the sh in sheep or fish. There are 7 digraphs used in Polish: ch, cz, dz, dź, dż, rz and sz. And there’s also trigraphs, such as dzi. Easy, right?
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The Hillsborough Literacy Council, Inc. (HLC) is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization committed to helping adults achieve basic reading and writing skills as well as English comprehension and communication skills.